

THE MOSAIC

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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

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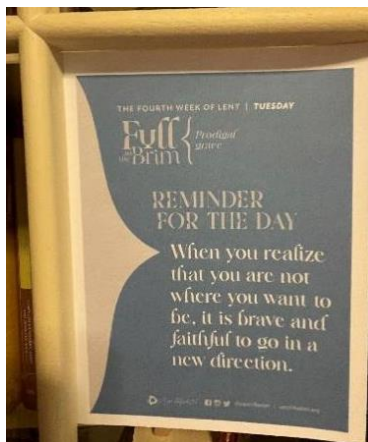
Volume XL No. 2

Pastoral Ponderings

In January 2020, we were in Niagara Falls. For the past few decades, my family has traveled to us for Christmas and we have rung in the New Year with Jim's parents at their home. We changed the pattern in 2019. Right after Christmas, we went to Illinois and then to Kentucky, but then we must have driven directly to Canada from Louisville all in one day. We planned ahead, took our passports, crossed into Canada and spent New Year's Eve in a high-rise hotel that overlooked the falls. We cheered the New Year from our hotel window, watching the light display on the water below. The next day, we celebrated my birthday a little early with a flight of margaritas. It was a memory-making trip. A few weeks ago, I came across a photo of the four of us on in front of the falls. I recalled how soon after that event, the world would change. We had welcomed the year 2020 with absolutely no idea of what was coming.



Twenty-two Emmanuelites are about to embark on a journey to significant sites of racial oppression and justice in Georgia and Alabama. We have planned ahead; we don't need passports this time. I hope the trip will be memorable, but we have no idea what is ahead of us. We have been planning this for more than two years. Will it live up to our expectations? For some, it may be a disappointment, not what we thought we were signing up for. For others, the experience may be life-changing. We are grateful for your support. Please keep praying.



Emmanuel Church continues its own journey. We try to make plans despite the persistent awareness that the future may contain surprises we would never anticipate. At the Annual Meeting, we learned that a team of architects are exploring ways that our building might be transformed to provide affordable housing, an urgent need in our city. A small team of Emmanuel members has committed themselves to seeing that process through. We are grateful for their dedication and leadership. Let us all commit ourselves to careful listening with open hearts and open minds and

continued...

a willingness to consider possibilities we never have before. There is no telling what lies ahead. Two quotations keep surfacing for me. One is from Jeremiah 29, *“For surely I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord, “plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”* This passage is addressed, not to individuals, but to a group of God’s people who were quite distressed and facing a very uncertain future.

The other quote to which I return often has been taped up in my office since Lent 2022. It is a devotional card that reads *“When you realize that you are not where you want to be, it is brave and faithful to go in a new direction.”*

To the people in exile in Jeremiah’s time, God said *“Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me: if you seek me with all your heart.”* May we be whole-hearted in our praying and in our seeking, and may we find a future with hope.

Peace,
Kathy

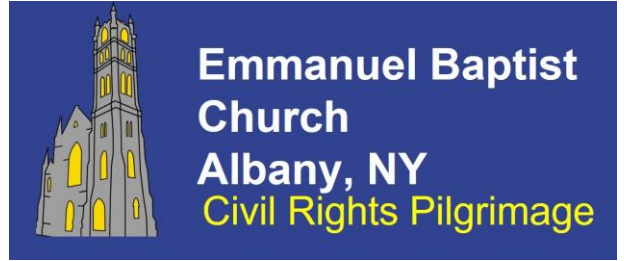
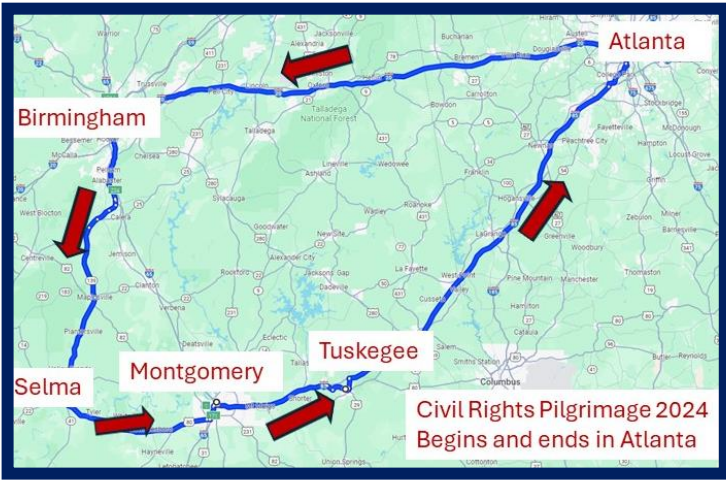


Participants in the Civil Rights Pilgrimage were asked “Why” they are embarking on the journey. Interspersed in this newsletter are some of their responses. Perhaps their thoughts will stimulate your own contemplation about antiracism and social justice.

“These events are part of the fabric of my youth. I remember them happening in real time...though I lived in a multi-racial community, seeing it unfold on TV gave me a sort of detachment... My hopes of this trip..put a face on these events, see the places, walk the streets, feel the emotions of those places. Try to put myself in the shoes of those directly affected.” -- Camille

“...to experience history from a different perspective...to get to know the people in the group better...” -- Marilyn

“...I will get to know my fellow pilgrims better as we become allies in the continuing work of achieving antiracism and social justice.” -- Edith



Pilgrimage Fundraising Lunch
 prepared & served by
 pilgrimage participants
 at the annual meeting January 28



“I’m going to learn more about black people and how hard things have been for them...A hope...to try out the lunch counter and that park with the statues looked pretty cool.. going to Taco Bell with Jim!” -- Judah



“...looking forward to being surprised by something” - Jim

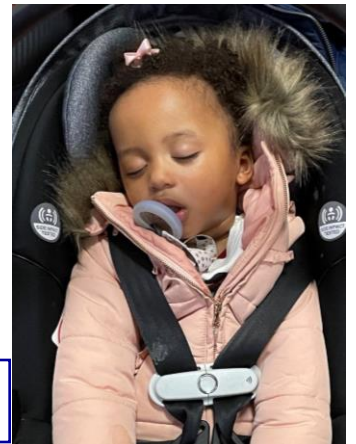
“I’m looking forward to learning more about many historical facts.” - Veronica

“One of my hopes...to experience more directly the history & meaning of the past and present civil rights movement.” – Tony

“...years since my last pilgrimage... looking forward to seeing new monuments and exhibits...getting to know some of my fellow travelers better” - Jan



“One of our hopes ...learn to be more compassionate with one another...looking forward to the different places we will be exploring together.” – Adella & Zechariah



“...to see the locations of important historical events. I believe strongly that learning about racial injustices of the past can help reduce the frequency in the future.” -- Maria



Lent to Easter 2024 February 14 – March 31

In Lent, we're reminded that, again and again, suffering and brokenness find us. We doubt again, we lament again, we mess up again. Again and again, the story of Jesus on the cross repeats—every time lives are taken unjustly, every time the powerful choose corruption and violence, every time individuals forget how to love. With exasperation, we exclaim, "Again?! How long, O God?" And yet, in the midst of the motion blur chaos of our lives, God offers a sacred refrain: "I choose you, I love you, I will lead you to repair." Again and again, God breaks the cycle and offers us a new way forward.

This theme provides a clear invitation to return to God again and again with our prayers, our dreams, our hopes, and our doubts. We continue to be community to one another by choosing each other over and over again.

In this season, we need rituals—both old and new—to remember and be transformed. Our worship will combine both familiar and new practices. We will pray the Lord's Prayer together (familiar) but we will use the words from the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer (new to some of us). Each Sunday's gathering will include a short homily followed by time for personal prayer in your seat or at a variety of prayer stations. The exception to that is on March 3 when we will have a guest preacher with a full length sermon and the celebration of Communion. Joins us this Lent as, again and again, we bring all of who we are to God and trust that God will meet us, time and again, along the way.

- Feb 18** Again and Again: God Meets Us
Mark 1:9-15, Homily: Mike Asbury

- Feb 25** Again & Again: We Are Called to Listen
Mark 8:31-38, Homily: Kathy Donley

- Mar 3** Again & Again: We Are Shown the Way
John 2:13-17, Pulpit Guest: Gerardo Marti

- March 10** Again & Again: God Loves First
Ephesians 2:1-10, Homily: Jim Ketcham

- March 17** Again & Again: We are Reformed
Homily: Kathy Donley

- March 24** Again & Again: We Draw On Courage
Homily: Tony Malone

- March 31** Again & Again: The Sun Rises
Easter Mark 16:1-8, Sermon: Kathy Donley

"...never been to Alabama...interest in black history..." MaKayla

Ash Wednesday February 14 6:00 p.m.



Gather in the Fellowship Hall for a soup and bread supper followed by worship in the sanctuary, starting at about 6:30. Zoomers may join for worship, using the same link that we use on Sunday mornings. It will be sent out by email. You can also find it on the front page of the church website emmanuelalbany.org

March 3 Special Guest: Gerardo Martí

Gerardo Martí is a sociologist of religion and professor at Davidson College in North Carolina. His academic interests are in race, religion and social change. He is one of three sociologists who are part of the research that is happening in conjunction with the Alliance of Baptists Thrive project. He is a sought-after speaker and author. Two of his many books include *The Deconstructed Church: Understanding Emerging Christianity* (2015) and *American Blindspot: Race, Class, Religion and the Trump Presidency* (2020). Gerardo will be our guest preacher on March 3.



Receiving Gerardo's preaching is a side-benefit of his visit. His primary reason for coming is to meet us in person. As part of the Thrive project, he has conducted Zoom interviews with several individuals, but he would like to get a sense of the whole church and of our anti-racism focus. As providence would have it, on this Sunday, the Civil Rights pilgrims will have just recently returned. Gerardo will be present, along with the rest of us, for a potluck following worship in which we will hear the stories of our pilgrims' experiences and learnings in Georgia and Alabama. This promises to be a very rich day at Emmanuel. Mark your calendars now.



Sunday at the Movies February 11 Screening of *The Way*

Remain after worship on February 11 to watch the movie *The Way*. Martin Sheen plays Tom, an American father who comes to France to collect the remains of his adult son, who died while walking the Camino de Santiago, better known as The Way of Saint James. Driven by his profound sadness and desire to understand his son better, Tom decides to embark on the historical pilgrimage. He is not alone on the journey. While walking The Camino, Tom meets other pilgrims from around the world, all looking for great meaning in their lives.

This movie offers a kind of hinge point between our consideration of Peter's journey to discipleship in the Wandering Heart series and the season of Lent which always offers the possibility of spiritual pilgrimage. A sandwich lunch will be provided. If you have not yet signed up, please email Kathy Moore no later than noon on Friday.

"...to deal with my white self and its privileges; confront my lack of black interaction & friends." -- Brian

"...see and walk where saints before us fought for social justice...allow myself to feel all the feelings and be vulnerable with the other pilgrims. ..growing closer with the other pilgrims and growing stronger together to fight for social justice." - Angela

"...seeing all the different exhibits..." - V

Happy Birthday... February

Wes Kendall
Augustus Farrell
Bob Hunziker
Maren Appe
Leah Appe
Becca Leet
William Htoo
David Green
Tim Bray
Cassandra Paul
Samantha Paul
Owen Smith
Gwendolynn Osborne
Gail Hill



5th
4th
6th
12th
12th
15th
15th
16th
18th
18th
18th
18th
21st
28th

If your birthday is not published in our monthly listing, please notify Dorothy at 465-5161.

“I want to learn more about the history of the Civil Rights Movement; seeing it where it happened will make it easier to understand.” -- Karen G.

**Remember the
Food Pantry...
razors & deodorant**

“...to consider how my white privilege has protected me from seeing or understanding the depth of the problem of racism..find ways to risk/use/sacrifice my privilege to foster better understanding of the evils of racism..” – Jim K.



“...because I want to experience the civil rights movement through the eyes and hearts of a diverse group of Christians. I expect to learn the most from our youngest pilgrims...I want to become a more courageous anti-racist, drawing inspiration from those who modelled incredible strength in the fight for freedom.” -- Kathy D.



“...learn more and be closer to the history of this country told by black people, not the sanitized version I grew up with...to understand how I am part of that history and part of the future of this country... appreciate the wide diversity humanity holds...” -- Jean



Come
and
walk

All are welcome!



THE
LABYRINTH
at First
Presbyterian
Church

362 STATE ST
ALBANY

WWW.FIRSTPRESALBANY.ORG

Monthly
every
3rd Thursday

11am-2pm
& 5-7pm*

* Parking is available in the church
parking lot until 6pm - after 6pm
please park on the street

Emmanuel Baptist Church
275 State St.
Albany, NY 12210

